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WISCONSIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS

OCTOBER 1985

DILHR
DEPARTMENT OF
INDUSTRY, LABOR & HUMAN RELATIONS

WISCONSIN DATA AND SOURCES

	INDICATOR	SOURCE
L1	Composite Index of Leading Indicators	Wis.Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
L2	Average Work Week, Manufacturing	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
L3	Average Overtime Hours, Mfg.	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
L4	Average Weekly Initial Claims	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
L5	Total Job Openings Received	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
L6	New Business Incorporations	Wisconsin Secretary of State
L7	Net Gain in Business Phone Access Lines	Wis. Telephone Co. and General Telephone Co.
L8	Building Plans Examined	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
C1	Help-Wanted Advertising Index (Milw.)	National Industrial Conference Board
C2	Total Unemployment Rate	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
C3	Natural Gas Sales	Wisconsin Public Service Commission
C4	New Car Registrations	Wis. Department of Transportation
C5	Electric Power Sales	Wisconsin Public Service Commission
C6	Total Securities Registrations	Wisconsin Commissioner of Securities
C7	Manufacturing Employment	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
C8	Average Weekly Earnings, Mfg.	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
C9	Cash Receipts From Farm Marketing	U.S. Department of Agriculture
C10	Contract Construction Employment	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
X1	Birth Registrations	Wis. Department of Health and Social Services
X2	Death Registgrations	Wis. Department of Health and Social Services
X3	Natural Net Gain in Population	Wis. Department of Health and Social Services
X4	Marriage Registrations	Wis. Department of Health and Social Services
X5	Consumer Price Index (Milwaukee)	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
X6	Index of Prices Received By Farmers	Wisconsin Department of Agriculture
X7	Net Gain in Residential Phone Access Lines	Wis. Telephone Co. and General Telephone Co.
X8	Labor Disputes, No. of Workers	Wis. Dept. of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
X9	Unemployment Compensation Exhaustees	Wis. Dept. of Industgry, Labor and Human Relations

NOTES: Selected series are seasonally adjusted by the Bureau of the Census X-11 Variant of the Census Method II Seasonal Adjustment Program. The adjusted data are plotted on arithmetic scales.

SECTION A is a summary of recent data and current changes for all indicators and is presented in chart form. The indicators are presented with cyclical timing as the principle basis of classification.

SECTION B is a summary of Wisconsin Labor Force Estimates, including Employment, Unemployment and Unemployment Rates, and selected U.S. data.

SECTION C analyzes the Wisconsin labor force by industry and by specified Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

SECTION D singles out certain economic time series as being leading or coinciding in relation to movements in aggregate economic activity. They are seasonally adjusted and presented graphically. The indicators are grouped by cyclical timing.

THE WISCONSIN ECONOMY

SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER

LEADING INDICATORS OF WISCONSIN'S ECONOMIC ACTIVITY CONTINUED TO GIVE MIXED SIGNALS IN SEPTEMBER. WHILE UNEMPLOYMENT DECREASED, EMPLOYMENT ALSO DECLINED.

LEADING INDICATORS

Production workers in Wisconsin's manufacturing industries spent more hours per week on the job in September than in August. The average workweek lengthened to 41.1 hours, a 0.2 hour increase.

Half of the increase came from more overtime hours. The weekly average grew in September at the normal seasonal rate. That, however, supplements a subpar growth of "straight time", which did grow, but at less than the seasonally normal pace.

The level of manufacturing employment decreased in September, a month in which the level usually increases slightly. The employment decrease coupled with the weak increases of hours worked implies a slow-up of total production. The employment losses concentrated in the nondurable goods sector.

The average weekly number of initial claims for unemployment compensation fell in September, but only slightly. There were 169 fewer claims per week this month than in August. To match the normal August-to-September pattern, initial claims should have declined by over seven-hundred per week.

The total number of job openings received by state Job Service offices grew in September by nearly a thousand. That's well above the usual seasonal rate. The job openings are orders from employers who are recruiting workers, thus, October's employment level should improve.

The number of new business incorporations throughout the state stayed fairly level -- 497 incorporations in August, 493 in September. However, a moderate increase - about sixty - was necessary to maintain the normal seasonal trend.

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE

The state's employment level decreased by over 5 thousand in September. That is counter to the usual seasonal pattern, there should have been an increase. One month ago, however, employment popped-up by an unusual 12 thousand. Thus, this month's drop may reflect a shift to earlier-than-normal seasonal hiring. Local government had a large employment gain, this month, resulting from the start of the school year.

Unemployment decreased by 6 thousand, and that's unusual for September. While unemployment has generally been decreasing over this year, the labor force has been having months of sporadic growth and of decrease. It seems that many are opting to leave the labor force upon becoming unemployed or are not entering the labor force upon becoming convinced no jobs are available. September's labor force decreased by 11 thousand. Most, but not all, of that loss is due to normal seasonal fluctuations.

Section

A WISCONSIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS

INDICATOR	UNIT	MONTHLY SERIES Latest Month		Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	% CHANGE Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	AVG. 1984
LEADING INDICATORS								
L1 COMPOSITE INDEX OF LEADING INDICATORS								
Seasonally Adjusted	INDEX	85.5	Sep	86.7	69.9	-1.4	22.3	70.1
L2 AVG. WORK WEEK, MFG.								
Unadjusted	HOURS	41.1	Sep	40.9	41.2	0.5	-0.2	41.1
Seasonally Adjusted		40.9		41.0	40.9	-0.2	0.0	
L3 AVG. OVERTIME HOURS, MFG.								
Unadjusted	HOURS	3.6	Sep	3.5	3.6	2.9	0.0	3.2
Seasonally Adjusted		3.1		3.1	3.1	0.0	0.0	
L4 AVG. WEEKLY INITIAL CLAIMS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	6,608	Sep	6,777	7,569	-2.5	-12.7	10,817
Seasonally Adjusted		9,661		8,778	11,066	10.1	-12.7	
L5 TOTAL JOB OPENINGS REC.								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	10,433	Sep	9,463	9,373	10.3	11.3	8,694
Seasonally Adjusted		8,971		6,089	8,060	47.3	11.3	
L6 NEW BUSINESS INCORPORATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	493	Sep	497	419	-0.8	17.7	562
Seasonally Adjusted		483		539	410	-10.4	17.8	
L7 NET GAIN IN BUSINESS PHONES ACCESS LINES								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	1,385	Sep	1,802	1,849	-23.1	-25.1	328
Seasonally Adjusted		1,214		1,602	414	-24.2	193.2	
L8 BUILDING PLANS EXAMINED								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	636	Sep	626	523	1.6	21.6	487
Seasonally Adjusted		602		588	495	2.4	21.6	
ROUGHLY COINCIDING INDICATORS								
C1 HELP-WANTED INDEX (MILW.)								
Seasonally Adjusted	INDEX	54	Sep	53	57	1.9	-5.3	52
C2 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, TOTAL								
Unadjusted	PERCENT	6.2	Sep	6.4	5.9	-	-	7.4
Seasonally Adjusted		6.8		6.5	7.5	-	-	
C3 NATURAL GAS SALES								
Unadjusted	MIL. THERMS	116.4	Aug	110.3	115.5	5.5	0.8	252.5
Seasonally Adjusted		244.5		243.5	242.7	0.4	0.7	
C4 NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	18,242	Sep	12,966	17,917	40.7	1.8	16,066
Seasonally Adjusted		18,734		11,421	18,398	64.0	1.8	
C5 ELECTRIC POWER SALES								
Unadjusted	MIL. KWH	2000.9	Aug	1998.5	2052.2	0.1	-2.5	1865.8
Seasonally Adjusted		1847.6		1887.2	1894.2	-2.1	-2.5	
C6 TOTAL SECURITIES REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	MIL. DOL.	71.4	Sep	171.1	113.6	-58.3	-31.6	89.4
Seasonally Adjusted		68.7		268.2	109.2	-74.4	-37.1	

A WISCONSIN ECONOMIC INDICATORS

INDICATOR	UNIT	MONTHLY SERIES Latest Month		Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	% CHANGE Mo/Ago	Yr/Ago	AVG. 1984
C7 MANUFACTURING EMPL.								
Unadjusted	THOUS.	524.4	Sep	527.3	533.8	-0.5	-1.8	518.3
Seasonally Adjusted		509.1		511.9	518.2	-0.5	-1.8	
C8 AVG. WEEKLY EARNINGS, MFG.								
Unadjusted	DOLLARS	415.93	Sep	411.05	408.70	1.2	1.8	412.46
Seasonally Adjusted		418.86		422.02	411.40	-0.7	1.8	
C9 CASH RECEIPTS FROM FARM MKTG.								
Unadjusted	MIL. DOL.	458.9	Dec	494.0	430.8	-7.1	6.5	435.9
Seasonally Adjusted		444.5		443.4	416.0	0.2	6.9	
C10 CONTRACT CONSTRUCTION EMPL.								
Unadjusted	THOUS.	67.4	Sep	67.0	65.4	0.6	3.1	58.3
Seasonally Adjusted		59.5		58.8	57.8	1.2	2.9	
OTHER KEY INDICATORS								
X1 BIRTH REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	6,433	Sep	5,966	6,280	7.8	2.4	6,101
Seasonally Adjusted		6,115		5,866	5,972	4.2	2.4	
X2 DEATH REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	3,381	Sep	2,981	2,906	13.4	16.3	3,438
Seasonally Adjusted		3,468		3,327	2,981	4.2	16.3	
X3 NATURAL NET GAIN POPULATION								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	3,052	Sep	2,985	3,374	2.2	-9.5	2,663
Seasonally Adjusted		2,617		2,560	2,893	2.2	-9.5	
X4 MARRIAGE REGISTRATIONS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	5,047	Sep	4,653	4,931	8.5	2.4	3,420
Seasonally Adjusted		3,641		3,172	3,557	14.8	2.4	
X5 CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (MILW.)				(Jul)				
Unadjusted	INDEX	332.4	Sep	331.1	324.0	-2.6	2.6	320.6
X6 PRICES RECEIVED BY FARMERS								
Unadjusted	INDEX	126	Sep	127	144	-0.8	-12.5	144
Seasonally Adjusted		126		127	144	-0.8	-12.5	
X7 NET GAIN IN RESIDENTIAL PHONES ACCESS LINES								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	4,588	Sep	3,941	8,748	16.4	-47.6	750
Seasonally Adjusted		744		1,444	754	-48.5	-1.3	
X8 LABOR DISPUTES, NO. OF WORKERS								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	910	Sep	2,082	464	-56.3	96.1	520
Seasonally Adjusted		498		1,380	254	-63.9	96.1	
X9 UNEMPL. COMPENSATION EXHAUSTEES								
Unadjusted	NUMBER	26,519	Sep	27,691	27,481	-4.2	-3.5	28,186
Seasonally Adjusted		27,033		26,473	28,011	2.1	-3.4	

Section

B LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES SEPTEMBER	(In Thousands)			Pct. Chg.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
Unadjusted					
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	2285.5	2396.5	2411.9	-0.5	-1.1
Employment (Inc. Labor Disputes)	2238.5	2243.6	2269.0	-0.2	-1.3
Unemployment	147.0	153.0	142.9	-3.9	2.9
Unemployment Rate	6.2	6.4	5.9	-	-
Seasonally Adjusted					
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	2365.4	2368.2	2432.2	-0.1	-2.7
Employment (Inc. Labor Disputes)	2204.6	2213.2	2249.0	-0.4	-2.0
Unemployment	160.8	155.0	183.2	3.7	-12.2
Unemployment Rate	6.8	6.5	7.5	-	-

WISCONSIN EMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES SEPTEMBER	(In Thousands)			Pct. Chg.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
TOTAL NONFARM WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS	2014.3	1997.4	1988.0	0.8	1.3
Unadjusted					
Manufacturing	523.5	525.2	533.4	-0.3	-1.9
Mining	2.1	2.2	2.0	-4.5	5.0
Contract Construction	67.4	67.0	65.4	0.6	3.1
Transportation and Public Utilities	92.5	88.4	91.0	4.6	1.6
Elec., Gas and Sanitary Services	17.5	17.8	17.1	-1.7	2.3
Wholesale Trade	100.6	101.6	101.5	-1.0	-0.9
Retail Trade	381.5	381.0	364.8	0.1	4.6
General Merchandise	48.0	47.9	48.4	0.2	-0.8
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	107.3	108.3	103.3	-0.9	3.9
Banking	28.9	29.2	27.8	-1.0	4.0
Insurance	33.5	33.7	32.2	-0.6	4.0
Service and Miscellaneous	423.0	428.0	412.8	-1.2	2.5
Hospitals	66.8	67.4	69.4	-0.9	-3.7
Private Education	21.3	20.5	24.2	3.9	-12.0
Government	316.3	295.8	313.8	6.9	0.8
State Government	83.0	77.9	81.4	6.5	2.0
Local Government	205.3	189.8	205.6	8.2	-0.1

UNITED STATES LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES SEPTEMBER	(In Thousands)			Pct. Chg.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
Seasonally Adjusted					
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	115,818	115,299	113,764	0.5	1.8
Employment	107,544	107,172	105,394	0.3	2.0
Unemployment	8,274	8,127	8,370	1.8	-1.1
Unemployment Rate	7.1	7.0	7.4	-	-

MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT *(Unadjusted)* SEPTEMBER	(In Thousands)		
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago
All Manufacturing (Including Canning)	523.5	525.2	533.4
All Manufacturing (Excluding Canning)	502.9	504.1	513.1
Durable Goods	315.8	313.8	326.8
Lumber and Wood Prod., (Except Furniture)	22.3	22.7	22.1
Sawmills and Planning Mills	3.2	3.3	3.2
Millwork, Veneer, Plywood & Prefab. Wood Prod.	9.9	10.3	10.0
Furniture and Fixtures	11.3	11.1	10.7
Household Furniture	4.8	4.8	4.7
Stone, Clay and Glass Products	7.3	7.6	7.5
Concrete, Gypsum and Plaster Products	3.2	3.3	3.2
Primary Metal Industries	19.7	19.8	20.8
Iron and Steel Foundries	11.0	11.0	11.6
Fabricated Metal Products	49.1	48.9	51.4
Heating Equipment (Except Electrical) & Plumbing Fixtures	4.9	4.8	5.4
Fabricated Structural Metal Products	12.1	12.1	12.2
Metal Stampings	11.8	11.7	12.7
Machinery (Except Electrical)	101.5	98.7	103.3
Engines and Turbines	18.6	18.4	20.0
Farm Machinery and Equipment	12.6	11.9	13.8
Const., Min. & Material Handling Mach. & Equip.	10.4	10.4	11.4
Metalworking Machinery and Equipment	12.3	12.2	11.7
Special Industry Machinery (Except Metalworking)	11.6	11.6	11.1
General Industrial Machinery and Equipment	14.7	14.7	15.4
Service Industry Machines	7.6	5.9	8.0
Electrical Machinery, Equipment and Supplies	49.0	49.7	53.0
Electrical Industrial Apparatus	17.7	18.0	18.1
Household Appliances	6.5	6.5	7.2
Transportation Equipment	34.4	34.1	37.0
Motor Vehicles and Equipment	26.7	26.7	30.1
Instruments and Related Products	10.7	10.6	10.8
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	10.4	10.6	10.2
Nondurable Goods	207.7	211.4	206.6
Food and Kindred Products	73.4	74.5	71.9
Meat Products	14.8	14.7	13.0
Dairy Products	18.7	19.2	18.1
Canning and Preserving	20.5	21.1	20.4
Bakery Products	3.9	3.8	4.1
Beverage Industries	8.1	8.1	8.8
Textile Mill Products	5.1	5.2	5.0
Knitting Mills	4.3	4.4	4.2
Apparel and Other Finished Products	6.8	6.9	6.6
Paper and Allied Products	46.6	48.7	47.1
Pulp and Paper Mills	28.9	30.4	29.1
Converted Paper and Paperboard Products	9.6	9.9	9.6
Paperboard Containers and Boxes	7.0	7.2	7.1
Printing, Publishing and Allied Industries	37.5	37.8	36.6
Newspapers	11.8	11.9	11.4
Commercial Printing	15.6	15.8	15.4
Chemicals and Allied Products	9.9	10.1	10.0
Rubber and Misc. Plastics Products	20.9	20.9	21.0
Miscellaneous Plastics Products	16.8	16.8	16.4
Leather and Leather Products	6.9	7.0	8.1
Leather Tanning and Finishing	1.6	1.6	1.9
Footwear (Except Rubber)	3.7	3.7	4.2
Other Nondurable Goods	–	–	–

Section

C WISCONSIN EARNINGS AND HOURS DATA

EARNINGS AND HOURS *(Unadjusted)* SEPTEMBER	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours		
	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago
All Manufacturing (Incl. Canning)	$416	$411	$409	41.1	40.9	41.2
All Manufacturing (Excl. Canning)	426	421	417	41.1	40.9	41.2
Durable Goods	431	427	426	41.0	40.9	41.3
Lumber/Wood Prod. (Exc. Furn.)	315	319	305	41.4	41.9	40.9
Furniture and Fixtures	322	314	313	42.1	41.4	41.4
Stone, Clay and Glass Products	410	410	402	43.5	43.2	42.0
Primary Metal Industries	404	406	409	40.7	40.8	42.2
Iron and Steel Foundries	412	409	414	41.0	40.8	42.3
Fabricated Metal Products	408	410	404	40.0	40.4	39.9
Fab. Structural Metal Prod.	444	435	438	43.4	42.9	43.2
Metal Stampings	406	397	367	39.6	39.3	36.8
Machinery (Except Electrical)	483	478	477	41.7	41.6	41.8
Engines and Turbines	502	498	501	39.9	39.9	41.6
Farm Machinery and Equip.	544	517	508	42.2	41.7	41.2
Const. and Related Mach.	503	493	507	42.3	41.6	42.8
Metalworking Mach. and Equip.	520	519	507	42.6	42.8	43.7
Spec. Ind. Mach. (Exc. Metal)	527	519	479	45.0	44.9	43.0
Gen. Industrial Mach. and Equip.	497	488	486	41.0	40.5	41.2
Electrical Mach., Equip. and Supp.	394	399	395	39.4	39.9	41.1
Electrical Industrial Apparatus	411	416	438	39.0	39.4	42.4
Transportation Equipment	571	551	557	41.5	40.3	41.8
Instruments and Related Prod.	360	341	353	40.0	37.8	40.5
Nondurable Goods	395	390	381	41.4	41.1	41.1
Food and Kindred Products	345	341	330	41.0	40.6	39.9
Meat Products	340	318	314	38.9	37.1	38.3
Dairy Products	396	391	390	40.9	40.7	40.8
Textile Mill Products	281	283	288	39.3	39.7	41.1
Apparel and Other Fin. Prod.	255	248	238	40.7	39.9	38.4
Paper and Allied Products	546	536	513	46.0	45.3	45.6
Pulp and Paper Mills	596	582	552	47.3	46.5	46.5
Printing, Pub. and Allied Prod.	439	424	428	39.4	38.9	38.9
Chemicals and Allied Products	443	442	439	41.2	41.2	41.5
Rubber and Misc. Plastics Prod.	319	321	326	38.7	39.0	39.9
Leather and Leather Products.	233	236	250	36.9	37.7	37.9

Section

C WISCONSIN EARNINGS AND HOURS DATA

EARNINGS AND HOURS *(Unadjusted)* SEPTEMBER	Average Hourly Earnings Including O.T.			Average Hourly Earnings Excluding O.T.		
	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago	Latest Month	Mo. Ago	Yr. Ago
All Manufacturing (Incl. Canning)	10.12	10.05	9.92	9.76	9.71	9.55
All Manufacturing (Excl. Canning)	10.37	10.29	10.13	9.98	9.92	9.74
Durable Goods	10.52	10.44	10.31	10.20	10.14	9.96
Lumber/Wood Prod. (Exc. Furn.)	7.62	7.62	7.45	7.53	7.50	7.37
Furniture and Fixtures	7.65	7.58	7.56	7.46	7.45	7.46
Stone, Clay and Glass Products	9.43	9.50	9.58	9.12	9.25	9.24
Primary Metal Industries	9.93	9.96	9.68	9.56	9.59	9.24
Iron and Steel Foundries	10.05	10.03	9.78	9.74	9.73	9.37
Fabricated Metal Products	10.20	10.15	10.12	9.82	9.80	9.62
Fab. Structural Metal Prod.	10.24	10.15	10.14	9.70	9.68	9.56
Metal Stampings	10.24	10.11	9.96	9.98	9.89	9.78
Machinery (Except Electrical)	11.59	11.48	11.40	11.31	11.20	11.06
Engines and Turbines	12.58	12.48	12.04	12.33	12.23	11.71
Farm Machinery and Equip.	12.88	12.40	12.32	12.44	12.00	12.12
Const. and Related Mach.	11.88	11.84	11.88	11.63	11.59	11.64
Metalworking Mach. and Equip.	12.21	12.13	11.61	11.74	11.65	11.01
Spec. Ind. Mach. (Exc. Metal) .	11.71	11.55	11.13	10.98	10.92	10.60
Gen. Industrial Mach. and Equip.	12.12	12.05	11.80	11.80	11.77	11.35
Electrical Mach., Equip. and Supp.	10.00	10.01	9.60	9.71	9.69	9.38
Electrical Industrial Apparatus	10.54	10.57	10.34	10.21	10.23	10.23
Transportation Equipment	13.75	13.66	13.33	13.17	13.18	12.76
Instruments and Related Prod.	9.00	9.03	8.72	8.87	8.88	8.47
Nondurable Goods	9.54	9.49	9.29	9.10	9.07	8.88
Food and Kindred Products	8.41	8.39	8.26	8.06	8.07	7.93
Meat Products	8.74	8.58	8.20	8.43	8.32	7.87
Dairy Products	9.68	9.60	9.57	9.24	9.16	9.11
Textile Mill Products	7.16	7.13	7.01	6.91	6.91	6.70
Apparel and Other Fin. Prod.	6.26	6.21	6.20	6.03	6.01	6.04
Paper and Allied Products	11.86	11.84	11.26	11.28	11.26	10.75
Pulp and Paper Mills	12.59	12.51	11.88	11.98	11.92	11.38
Printing, Pub. and Allied Prod.	11.15	10.89	10.99	–	–	–
Chemicals and Allied Products	10.75	10.73	10.59	10.50	10.48	10.32
Rubber and Misc. Plastics Prod.	8.23	8.22	8.16	8.00	7.92	7.87
Leather and Leather Products.	6.31	6.26	6.60	6.13	6.10	6.53

Section

C SUMMARY OF RECENT WISCONSIN DATA

EARNINGS AND HOURS, MFG. Production Workers (Unadjusted) SEPTEMBER	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings Including O.T.			Average Hourly Earnings Excluding O.T.	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Latest Month	Month Ago
United States	$389	$384	$376	40.8	40.5	40.7	9.54	9.48	9.24	-	-
Wisconsin	416	411	409	41.1	40.9	41.2	10.12	10.05	9.92	9.76	9.71
Selected Areas											
Appleton-Oshkosh (Calumet-Winnebago-Outagamie)	434	429	415	43.2	42.6	42.7	10.05	10.06	9.73	9.58	9.57
Beloit (City)	364	353	350	37.9	37.4	37.9	9.61	9.44	9.23	-	-
Eau Claire (Eau Claire-Chippewa)	429	423	409	40.8	40.6	41.2	10.51	10.41	9.92	10.16	9.94
Fond du Lac (County)	365	366	391	41.1	41.6	43.0	8.88	8.79	9.09	8.51	8.42
Green Bay (Brown County)	468	449	433	42.8	41.1	41.3	10.93	10.93	10.48	10.19	10.30
Janesville (City)	515	479	551	38.9	36.6	42.0	13.23	13.08	13.11	13.07	12.90
Janesville-Beloit (Rock County)	461	437	471	39.1	37.7	40.4	11.79	11.59	11.67	11.53	11.29
Kenosha (County)	481	476	478	39.8	39.6	40.4	12.09	12.01	11.84	11.61	11.63
La Crosse (County)	355	306	342	39.5	37.9	38.8	8.99	8.07	8.82	8.80	7.59
Madison (Dane County)	386	375	394	41.5	41.3	43.5	9.31	9.07	9.06	8.93	8.66
Manitowoc (County)	348	342	316	39.0	38.9	36.0	8.92	8.80	8.78	8.62	8.48
Milwaukee (Milwaukee-Ozaukee-Waukesha-Washington)	472	472	466	40.8	40.7	41.3	11.58	11.60	11.29	11.03	11.06
Racine (County)	419	406	427	39.3	39.2	39.5	10.66	10.35	10.81	10.32	10.03
Sheboygan (County)	373	368	387	39.9	39.2	40.1	9.35	9.39	9.65	9.20	9.16
Wausau (Marathon County)	412	400	398	42.3	41.4	42.3	9.74	9.65	9.40	9.31	9.23

EMPLOYMENT, MFG. (Unadjusted) SEPTEMBER	(In Thousands)			Percent Change	
	Latest Month	Month Ago	Year Ago	Month Ago	Year Ago
United States	19,506	19,500	19,724	0.0	-1.1
Wisconsin	523.5	525.2	533.4	-0.3	-1.9
Selected Areas					
Appleton-Oshkosh (Calumet-Winnebago-Outagamie)	48.4	49.2	47.6	-1.6	1.7
Beloit (City)	5.4	5.6	5.8	-3.6	-6.9
Eau Claire (Eau Claire-Chippewa)	8.9	9.1	9.3	-2.2	-4.3
Fond du Lac (County)	10.7	10.8	11.0	-0.9	-2.7
Green Bay (Brown County)	24.1	24.8	23.8	-2.8	1.3
Janesville (City)	11.0	11.0	11.0	0.0	0.0
Janesville-Beloit (Rock County)	18.8	19.0	19.2	-1.1	-2.1
Kenosha (County)	12.4	12.5	16.5	-0.8	-24.8
La Crosse (County)	10.8	8.8	11.1	22.7	-2.7
Madison (Dane County)	22.0	21.8	19.7	0.9	11.7
Manitowoc (County)	11.4	11.5	11.9	-0.9	-4.2
Milwaukee (Milwaukee-Ozaukee-Waukesha-Washington)	168.1	167.9	176.0	0.1	-4.5
Racine (County)	25.0	24.3	26.1	2.9	-4.2
Sheboygan (County)	18.7	18.8	19.7	-0.5	-5.1
Wausau (Marathon County)	11.8	12.0	11.2	-1.7	5.4

A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE . . . SOME DANGEROUS THINGS

by Joseph Tumpach, Jr.

A word, as Humpty Dumpty explained, means exactly what one chooses it to mean. And a number, as many maintain, means exactly what a statistician wants it to mean. Actually, the myth of lying with statistics should be known as the act of not-telling-all with statistics. It's a sin of omission. And, all politicians, journalists, and arm-chair economists do it.

In many cases, because of the required time and the cost of collecting data, statistics for specific subjects are simply not available. In economics, for example, while there is a number representing the total amount of goods and services produced in the country, the Gross National Product, which indicates the level of economic activity, there is no comparable statistic for the state.

Statistics is a relatively young discipline. A few people are competent and confident with the depths and mysteries of statistical analysis; a few are unable and fearful of them; most are unaware and unconcerned about them. That does not mean the ability to handle complex statistical techniques ought to immediately be built into our educational curriculum. But, we ought to become more aware of the various perspectives of a stated statistic.

It is because statistics is a young science that the complex concepts have yet to be translated and assimilated into common knowledge. Labor market statistics is no exception. Once a month, federal government officials release a percent figure, the unemployment rate, which many take as a summary of the entire labor market situation throughout the country. If the unemployment rate decreases from one month to the next, that's good; if it increases, bad. What's more, the common perception of what is "severe" changes. Any percent above 4.5 used to be severe, then, anything above 6.0 percent. We now are accustomed to a rate of around 8.0 percent unemployment.

Wisconsin state officials also release a monthly unemployment rate. We can compare the state's unemployment rate to the nation's and judge our state's labor condition. But, we cannot determine who in the state is unemployed each month. Our estimating procedure is simply not able to tell us the amount of youth unemployment; to tell us if family heads are unemployed; to tell us what portion of the unemployed are non-white, are male or female, or are handicapped. We can use alternative methods to estimate those for the state, but estimates are based on national trends and are done only annually, if done.

The lack of detailed unemployment data fosters a tendency to lump all segments of the unemployed into a single unemployment rate and neglects to engender much thought about what the number means. What share of the unemployed, for example, are people, both men and women, who want only part-time employment, perhaps to supplement family income? Ought those part-time workers who are unemployed receive the same effort in job development as the full-time family bread winner? What portion of the unemployed are teenagers living at home? And, how much emphasis should we attach to a high youth unemployment rate in view of the fact that a person's early labor market experience will temper that individual's work ethic throughout his or her life? Do large numbers of part-time job seekers look for part-time work only because they are convinced that no full-time jobs are available? The basic question all these inquiries point to

is whether a single unemployment rate can accurately portray the unemployment situation.

Even with a complete set of data describing a labor market, the data may come from different areas of study and may be gathered or produced by different government agencies. The lack of coordination may result in a labor force situation wrongly interpreted. Labor force growth, for example, results from several different factors...population growth, economic factors, business-investment tax structures. Yet, at various stages of the business cycle, recession or growth, we tend to attribute labor force change solely to economic conditions.

Wisconsin's labor force has grown by 115 thousand from 1980 through the first three-quarters of 1985, a period encompassing both recession and recovery. In that time there have been stages of labor force growth and contraction, coinciding with economic conditions. Yet, three-fourths of the long-range labor force growth is accounted for by applying the 1980 labor force participation rates of men and women of labor force age to the 1985 population. It seems likely that population is the primary long-range labor force determiner with economic conditions impeding or promoting short-range growth.

True, being in the labor force does not guarantee employment, and during recessions the level of unemployment climbs. What use is knowledge of demographics and long-range labor market statistics, then? A better idea of the labor market, both short and long-range, will result in better resource allocating decisions. And that is what economics is about. We might aid economic recovery if, for example, we grant more resources to retraining programs for dislocated workers laid off during the recession than to youth employment programs, if population trends indicate slow growth of the number of 16 to 21 year olds even if the unemployment rate for youth reaches double digits.

That is not to say certain groups with employment problems should stop receiving our attention, based on statistics alone. It does imply, however, that numbers can be power-packed, emotion-producing, and biased to specific interests.

Sometimes a policy based on other than economic data is desirable. Affirmative Action programs to aid employment of racial and ethnic minorities is a prime example. Minorities had and do still have unemployment rates of over twice the non-minority rate. If our efforts at solving employment problems were based strictly on economic reasoning, our thinking might go something like this: "True, minorities have an unemployment rate of over twice the non-minority rate. But, since minorities compose only about 10 or 11 percent of our population and between 5 and 6 percent of our labor force, there is little over-all benefit in allocating resources to minority unemployment. If we can reduce the minority unemployment rate to that of non-minorities, the total unemployment rate will be lessened by only four-tenths of one percent." Such reasoning, while analytically correct, fails to account for our social conscience and neglects to recognize that we believe no segment of our population should suffer abnormal hardship.

Probably the easiest mistake to avoid with statistics is confusing entirely different data. Recently, women's participation in the labor force exceeded 50 percent. That means that of all women who are 16 years old and older, labor force age, over half are working or looking for work. Many have assumed that also means that over half of the labor force is made-up of women. That seems reasonable, since

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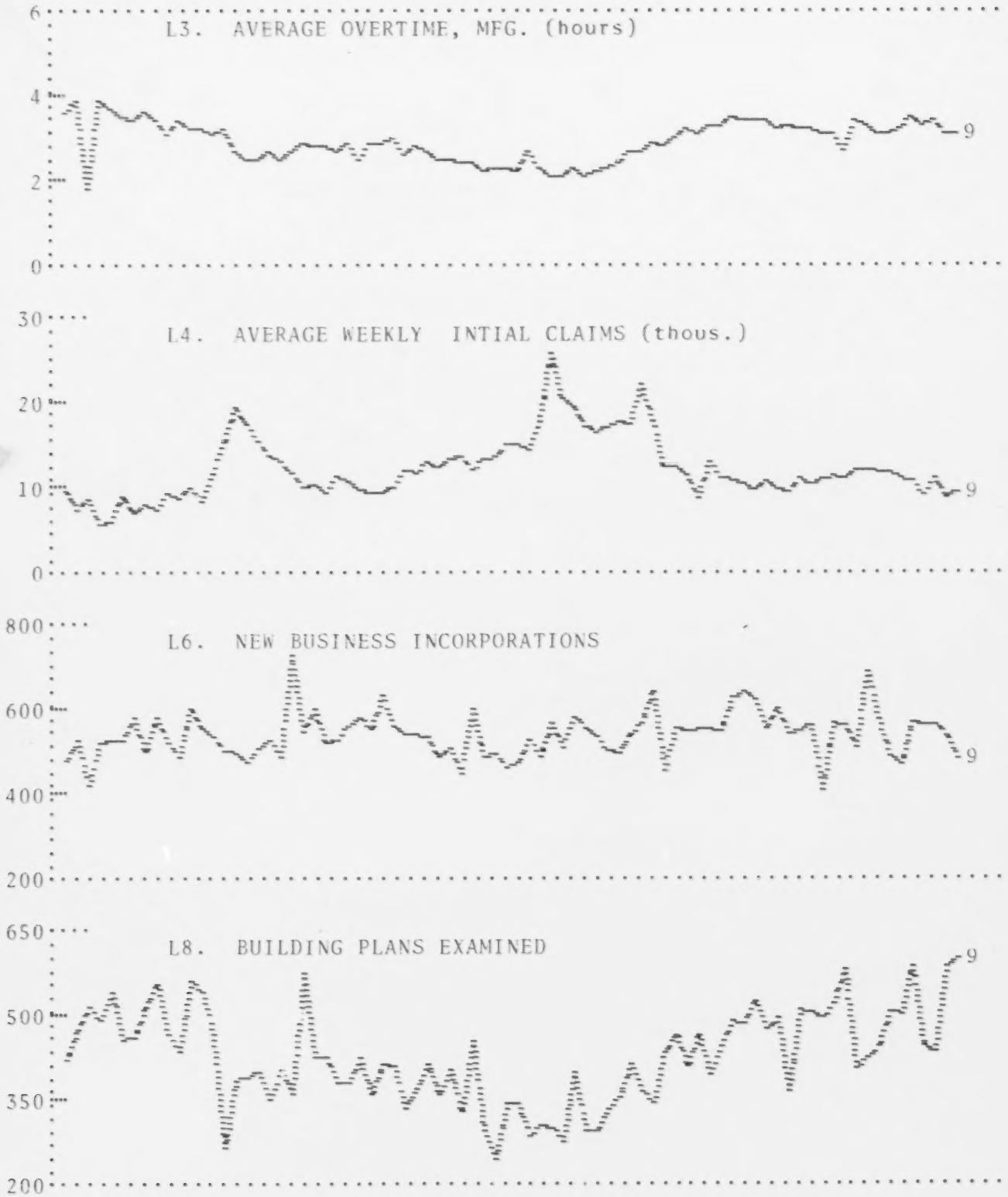

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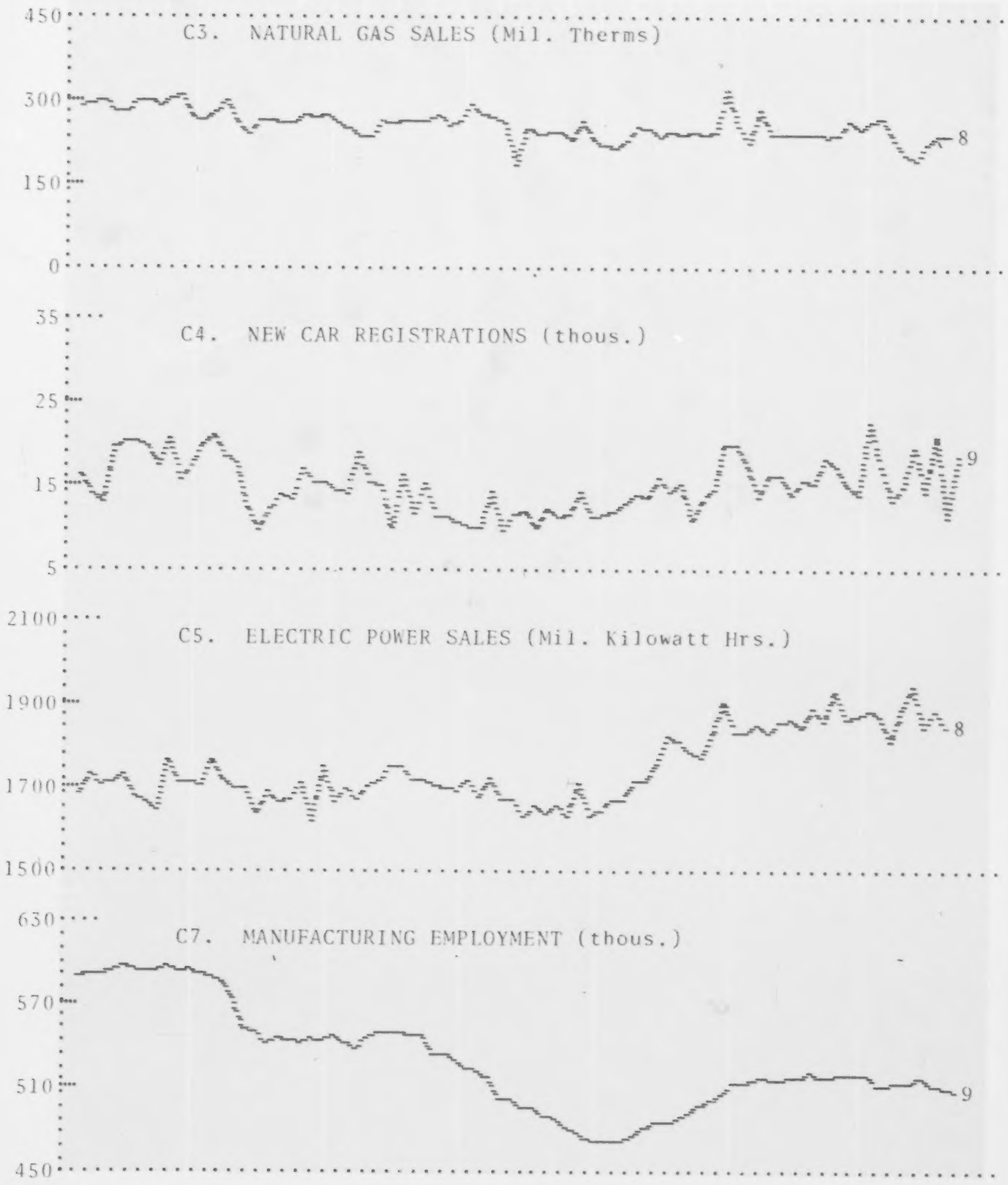

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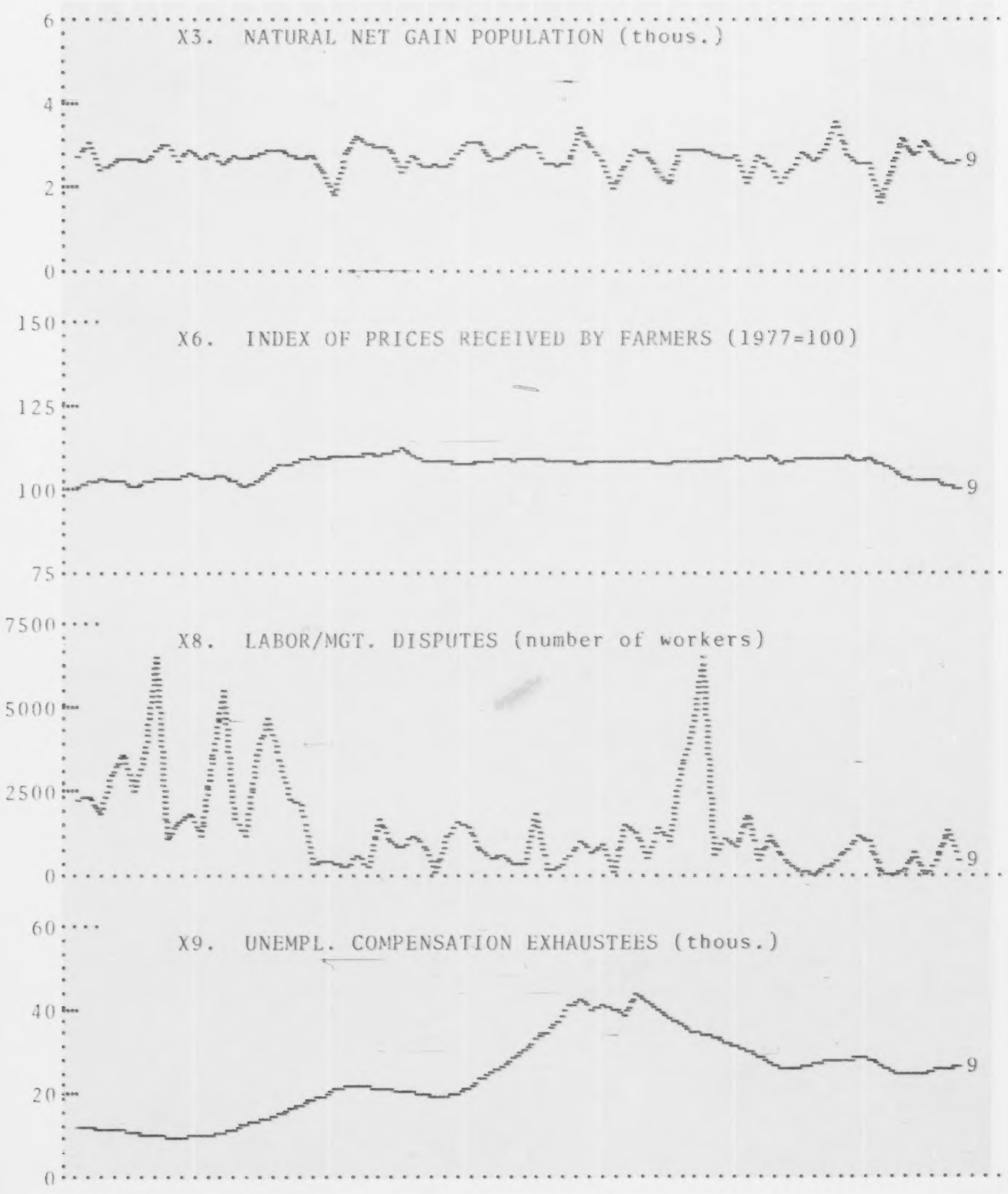

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(Continued from Page 10)

women compose slightly over half of our population. But, that is a confusion of labor force participation rates with labor force composition. While over half of all women are in the labor force, they compose only about 43 or 44 percent of the labor force. That is explained by much higher participation rates for men. About two-thirds over-all, and over ninety percent of prime-working-age men are in the labor force. A little careful thought can clearly point out such neglected-to-be-mentioned statistics.

The state's Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations offers publications which explain labor market data, including:

The ABC'of LMI
How Labor Markets Operate
Labor Market Information Data Series Definitions
LMI Glossary